

To whom it may concern,

My name is Michael Richardson and I have been a compliant Tier 2 registered sex offender in the state of Michigan since 2012. My purpose for this letter is to share how the registry has not only negatively impacted my life but the life of my family as well. I would like to first ask you to please keep in mind as you read this letter, long before I committed the crimes which required me to be on our registry, I was a victim of sexual assault by an adult family member when I was around 9 years old. I share that personal aspect of my life in hopes that, in no way or at any time you feel like I am trying to minimize my decisions which led me to become a registered sex offender or that I am insensitive to the impact sexual assault has on victims.

My main issue with the registry is the judgement I receive by people who have no personal connection to me, my victim or our criminal justice system. When I returned to Michigan in October 2012, I moved into a rental condo with my mother in Howell where we still live. I began to try to take advantage of the second chance I was given and made a couple of friends while walking around the complex where we live to include, the president of our association at the time and her husband. For my first three years living here I didn't really have any problems stemming from being on our registry with regard to my home life but that changed when the president and her husband moved and we got a new president of the association. Suddenly our landlord starting receiving multiple complaints against me such as, I was driving too fast, not parking in our garage and littering the property with cigarette butts when neither my mother or myself has smoked cigarettes in over 20 years. The new association president was determined to have me evicted and had even told neighbors I was keeping the property values lower in our complex, according to my landlord. I am not sure how but my landlord was finally able to get him to quit filing complaints against me.

Since the harassment started by the association president, I have had neighbors act like they were going to hit me with their car when I was out walking or ride very close to me on a bike and say judgmental things to me. Now, I cut through the woods where I live and walk a dirt road behind my condo most of the time because, I am afraid to walk around my neighborhood sometimes. There was also an incident where one of my neighbors and her friends blocked me from entering the parking lot to my condo with their car, flipped me off and mocked me with insulting sexual gestures. These are all people I do not know personally.

I have two teenage sons who have been negatively impacted as well. They usually spend about five or six weeks every summer and some holidays with me and they both were here for one of the incidents with the association president . While I don't think my sons are mad at me for being on the registry, I do feel they have struggled with the stigma when we are out in public. They have also struggled with other restrictions such as the fact I will be unable to attend family school activities for relatives long after I have completed my sentence.

In addition, I have had prospective employers tell me that they didn't want the stigma associated with me working at their place of business because it would be public information and I did not apply to a few jobs because the businesses would be in violation of the 1000-foot restriction. The

\$50 annual fee isn't fair from a punitive perspective as well. Especially when income is generally more difficult for sex offenders to earn.

I know the purpose of this letter is to provide details regarding my negative experiences but I would also like to share a couple of other things about me to provide some additional context I feel is relevant. First, I served in the Air Force from 1993-1997 as a radiology technologist. After my discharge, I worked as a radiology technologist at Pontiac Osteopathic hospital (now McLaren hospital), a C.T. and MRI technologist at St. Joseph hospital in Tawas, MI and as a MRI technologist in Johnson City, Tennessee until my arrest in 2011. At no point in my nearly 20 years in healthcare, performing sensitive medical procedures, nor since I have been put on the registry have I had a single patient or coworker come forward to make any allegations against me. I was never convicted of any crimes before my convictions in 2012 nor have I been charged or convicted of any crimes since. I feel strongly those facts indicate I am not a habitual offender. It also supports the assertion people like me, should be afforded the opportunity to live and work in peace without being judged or harassed by the public for the things I did which put me on the registry. I know it isn't easy for anyone with a criminal background but at this time, only those who have committed crimes of a sexual nature face the added hurdles associated with the stigma and limitations of being on a public registry.

Three years ago, my mother was diagnosed with breast cancer and last year she had a heart attack and a subsequent procedure where doctors placed four stents in her heart. The cardiologist who performed her initial catheterization felt that the amount of disease she had definitely warranted open heart bypass surgery but, no surgeon was willing to operate on her because she has comorbidity issues and they thought the risk did not outweigh the reward. While I am not a doctor, I feel as though my mom is not going to be around much longer, especially now that we have a pandemic and she is high risk. If my situation does not change, I will likely end up homeless if she should pass away anytime soon. Furthermore, even though she has never mentioned it to me, I know without a doubt, the stress from the aforementioned issues along with my inability to take care of myself financially has impacted her overall health and finances in a negative way.

Prior to this letter I have not been involved with the ACLU or any other group or organization trying to make meaningful changes because of embarrassment, fear and depression related issues. I now feel differently and hope that together we can come up with a system that affords people with my type of background a second chance more similar to what most people who commit crimes in our state get. No other crime in our state, to include taking someone else's life requires people to have their criminal history so easily accessible where people are able to judge them, and we live in an extremely judgmental society in my opinion. I feel strongly that the data which indicates little to no evidence the registry prevents any crime and a very low recidivism rate warrants a modification of our current registry as well. Lastly, we have managed to be able to do without a sex offender registry since our governor declared the stay-at-home order and state of emergency as a judge ruled it was not enforceable during this time.

I sincerely appreciate your time and careful consideration.

Michael S. Richardson